









NEWS RELEASE U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE 134 Union Boulevard Lakewood, Colorado 80228

06-58 For Immediate Release October 11, 2006

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INTERIOR SECRETARY DIRK KEMPTHORNE TO JOIN PARTNERS IN CELEBRATING THE EXPANSION OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN ARSENAL NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

COMMERCE CITY, CO – October 13, 2006 - Interior Secretary Dirk Kempthorne will observe National Wildlife Refuge Week by hosting a ceremony celebrating the expansion of the Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge. The event marks the formal transfer of more than 7,000 acres of land from the U.S. Army to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, significantly increasing the size of the refuge to nearly 12,500 acres.

Once the cleanup at the Arsenal is complete, approximately 2,500 additional acres of land will be transferred to the Service.

Secretary Kempthorne will join Bill Owens, Governor of Colorado, members of the Colorado Congressional delegation, Tad Davis, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army for Environment, Safety and Occupational Health, Stephen L. Johnson, EPA Administrator, and representatives from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Shell Oil Company and other organizations in celebrating the addition of land into the National Wildlife Refuge System and recognizing the cooperative effort that led to this significant accomplishment.

"This transfer is another important milestone in the successful cleanup at the Arsenal, and an outstanding example of the partnerships that make the National Wildlife Refuge System one of our nation's most important conservation assets," said Kempthorne. "The Interior Department is proud to work with the Army, EPA, Shell, the State of Colorado, and many other public and private partners to convert this site into a premier urban wildlife refuge."

"The State of Colorado and its citizens have a unique and remarkable resource because of the hard work of countless organizations, workers and citizens; all of whom have a reason to be proud of their accomplishments as we celebrate the expansion of the wildlife refuge today," said Colorado Governor Bill Owens.

"The Army is proud to turn this land over to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to more than double the size of the urban refuge," said Tad Davis, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army for Environment, Safety and Occupational Health. "Together, the public and private sector have met the highest environmental and safety standards, and are giving this land back to the community as an asset for generations to enjoy."

"I congratulate the U.S. Army and Fish & Wildlife Service for their accomplishments here at the Arsenal and thank the community for its support in helping us realize this goal," said Ray Collins, Global Divestments Manager for Shell Chemical Co. "Shell is proud to be a part of this productive partnership, which former Defense Secretary William Cohen called a 'national model' of cooperation among the public and private sectors."

"EPA and the entire Bush Administration are committed to turning problem properties back into community assets," said EPA Administrator Stephen L. Johnson. "With an expanded wildlife refuge right in their own Backyard, the residents of the Denver area are truly fortunate that a once environmental eyesore is now a source of local pride."

The media is invited to visit Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge during its invitation-only, refuge expansion ceremony.

When: Friday, October 13, 10:00 a.m. (Invitation only – VIP and Media Event)
Where: Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge
56th Avenue and Havana Street, South Gate entrance

Photo ID required

Background

The 27 square-mile Rocky Mountain Arsenal, located in Commerce City, Colorado, approximately 10 miles northeast of downtown Denver, is one of the largest cleanup sites in the country. In 1942, RMA was built to manufacture chemical weapons to be used in World War II as a war deterrent. In 1946, some of the facilities were leased to private industry for the production of industrial and agricultural chemicals. The RMA later became a site for chemical agent demilitarization programs. Since 1985, the site's sole mission has been environmental remediation. In 1987, RMA was listed on EPA's Superfund National Priorities List.

Currently, RMA is undergoing an extensive and safe environmental cleanup of the site's soil, structures and groundwater. Cleanup plans were developed and approved by the Army, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the State of Colorado, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Shell Oil Company. Once the cleanup is complete, the remainder of RMA's vast open spaces will officially transition to one of the largest urban national wildlife refuges in the nation. The site now provides sanctuary for more than 330 species of wildlife, including deer, coyotes, bald eagles and burrowing owls. The cleanup is approximately 2/3 complete and is expected to conclude in 2011.

The refuge was formally established by former Interior Secretary Norton in a major event in April 2004 that marked the culmination of years of commitment, cooperation, and partnership. The latest milestone in the cleanup process is a land transfer, from Army to the Service resulting in a significant (7,200 acre) expansion of the refuge. The transfer will more than double the size of the current refuge, one of America's premier urban wildlife refuges and a high-profile, dynamic resource located in the heart of the rapidly-growing metro Denver region.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the principal Federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting and enhancing fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service manages the 95-million-acre National Wildlife Refuge System, which encompasses 545 national wildlife refuges, thousands of small wetlands and other special management areas. It also operates 69 national fish hatcheries, 64 fishery resources offices and 81 ecological services field stations. The agency enforces federal wildlife laws, administers the Endangered Species Act, manages migratory bird populations, restores nationally significant fisheries, conserves and restores wildlife habitat such as wetlands, and helps foreign and Native American tribal

governments with their conservation efforts. It also oversees the Federal Assistance program, which distributes hundreds of millions of dollars in excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment to state fish and wildlife agencies.